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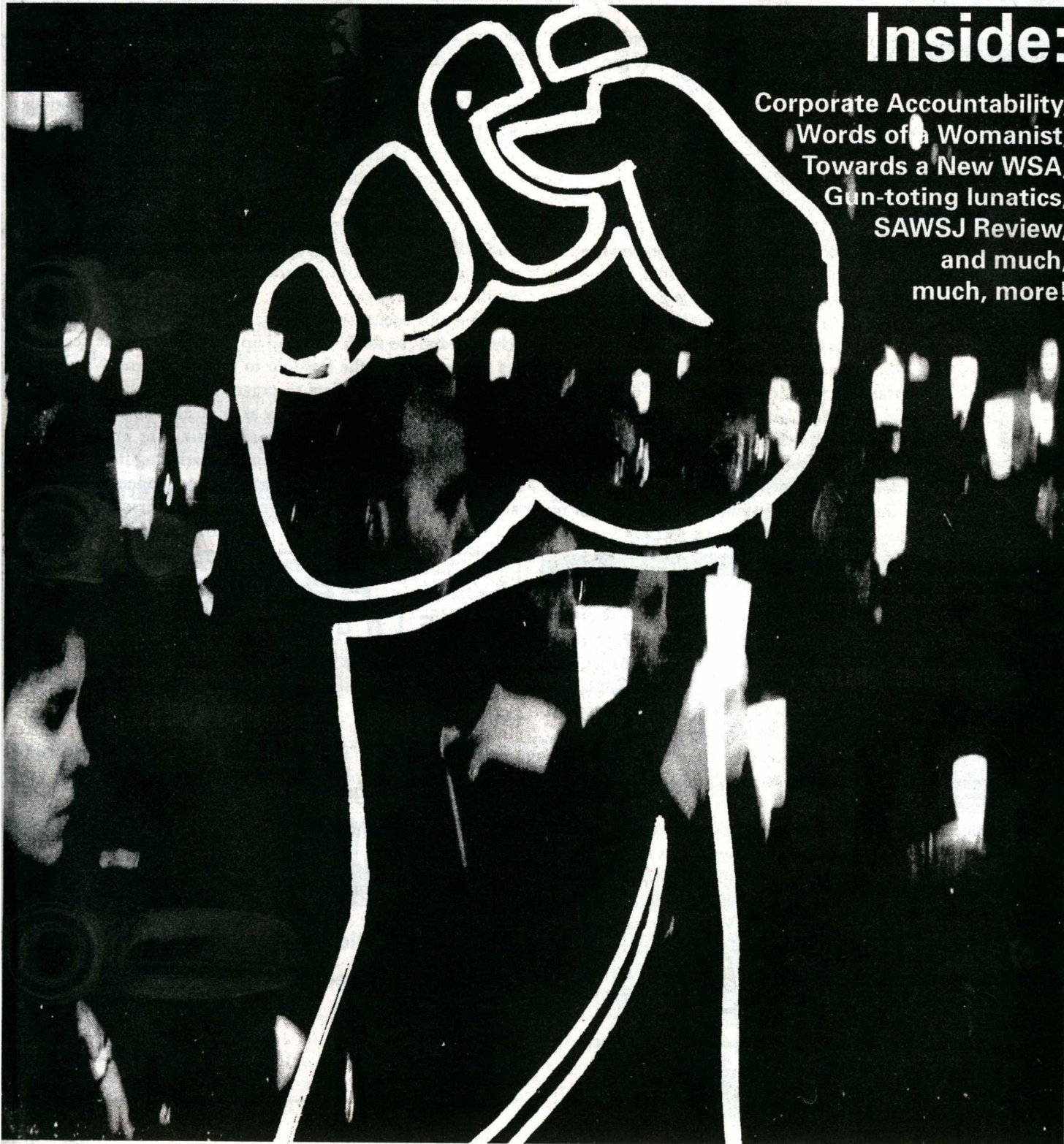
May 1999

# HERMES

WESLEYAN'S MAGAZINE OF POLITICAL, CRITICAL, AND CREATIVE THOUGHT

## Inside:

Corporate Accountability,  
Words of a Womanist,  
Towards a New WSA,  
Gun-toting lunatics,  
SAWSJ Review,  
and much,  
much, more!





## Intellectual Labor

Last weekend I went to a labor conference at Yale. In spite of the fact that it was run by a group called Scholars, Artists, and Writers for Social Justice (SAWSJ), it was very much a rank-and-file event. At a "Union Cities" panel, organizers from Las Vegas and Los Angeles described everything from living wage campaigns to casino strikes. One organizer who'd joined the union as a 15-year-old prep cook told us about a strike that lasted "six years, four months, and ten days" without a single worker scabbing.

And then the other side of the conference showed its face: some woman raised her hand and asked him, "What can we as writers, artists, and . . . so forth, do to help?" What bothered me most was the line she seemed to be drawing between herself as an artist (or whatever she is) and the organizers—as if she wasn't labor in the culture industry just as much as he was labor in the service sector.

I'm someone who identifies as writer, artist, and scholar, and I'll be the first to admit I've asked myself her question before. But I've only found one answer—that's that you're asking the wrong question. Make no mistake: Culture and Information are the two most important industries in today's economy, and scholars, writers, and artists are either unemployed or serve as glorified wage labor. The tragedy is that we are all trained to understand ourselves as individuals who succeed or fail based on the merit of our work. We go through life with the hidden assumption that we'd be doing better if our work was more inspired, and that the folks who don't make it just didn't have what it takes. Never mind that the NEA's budget's been cut by half, that states are drastically reducing funds for public higher education, that publishers and publications are being bought up by larger and larger conglomerates that tolerate less and less radi-

cal writing.

The problem is this—if you're an artist, writer, or scholar, your working conditions are worsening rapidly, but chances are that organizing and collective action are the furthest thing from your mind. Try to organize professors at any school and the biggest obstacle you'll face is convincing them to accept the mantle of 'worker.'

It's particularly tragic because the stakes are so high: workers in the culture and information industries produce a society's understanding of itself; their labor can work to shore up the ideologies of late capitalism or challenge them. But as corporate interests consolidate ownership of networks, newspapers, and publishers; as universities face funding cuts and answer with tuition hikes, retrenchment, and business-style administration; as well-funded right-wing groups attack both the arts and progressive curricula; as the private sector fills the gap left by our crumbling civil society—as all of this happens without protest, those workers operate under more and more constraints. Progressive voices in the press are silenced. Good books don't get published. Mass-culture replaces community. Universities exclude poorer students and commit those who do graduate to debt-driven corporate wage-slavery.

What this society needs most of all is for its artists, writers, scholars, and "so forth" to stand up for themselves. It needs writers to organize for the freedom to publish progressive news and books; it needs professors to organize on behalf of themselves, their students, and the academy as an institution. It needs artists to organize for the freedom (and funding) to make work that builds community rather than simply marketing itself to the theatre-and-gallery elite. And for that to happen, we scholars, artists, and writers may just have to get over ourselves.

BRIAN EDWARDS-TIEKERT

## ABOUT HERMES

For 25 years, *Hermes* has been starting trouble at Wesleyan. It was founded in 1975 by a group of student activists disgruntled with (among other things), Wesleyan's school newspaper, *the Argus*. *Hermes* bore the distinction of being New England's longest-running progressive student publication until it stopped production for the '91-'92 academic year. Subsequently revived as monthly journal, *Hermes* isn't an *Argus* rival anymore—now we to provide a more political, critical, and creative approach to issues on and off-campus.

We produce seven or eight issues per academic year, publishing material with a decidedly leftish slant. Anythings's fair game; we publish investigative pieces, report on issues that don't make it into the mainstream press, and serve as a forum for progressive politics and radical thought on campus. We aim to raise awareness, spark debate, politicize University life, and energize the student body.

We are organized as a non-heirarchical collective—anyone is welcome to join. You can get in touch with us (860) 685-7195 or check out our web page at <http://www.wesleyan.edu/hermes>.

Cover Design by Jessica Fantz

## Hermes

Finds a Cause

Free Mumia!

Jessica Fantz

Free Tibet!

MC Chan

Free Love.

Kate Holbein

Legalize Drugs!

Adam Hurter

Legalize Gambling!

Tyler Cabot

Legalize Sodomy!

Eric Kushins

Ban Guns!

Ben Oppenheim

Ban Corporations!

Bob the Cat

Ban Long Speeches!

Laura Clawson

Boycott Gallo!

Hannah Neilsen-Jones

Boycott Sleep!

Brian Edwards-Tiekert

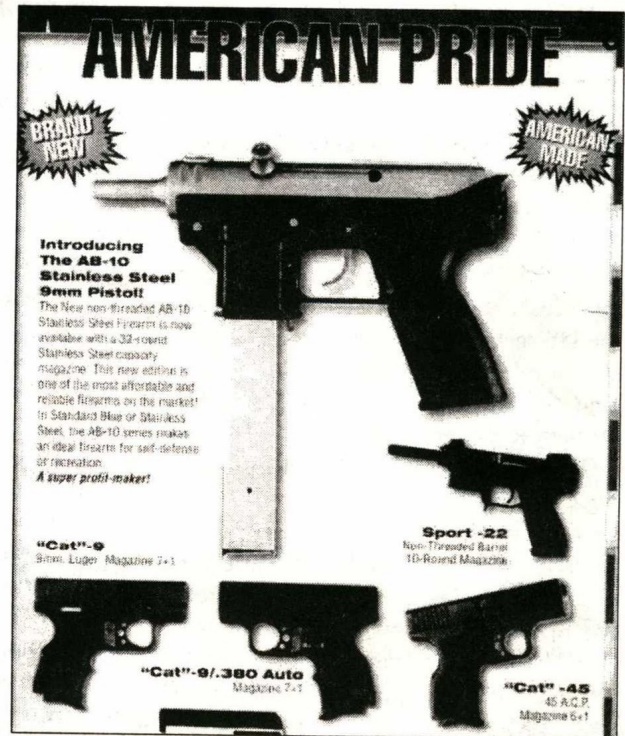


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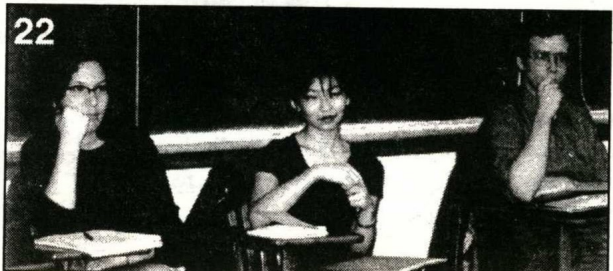
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# MAIL BIN

## KOSOVO vs. TURKEY

*Bellflower, CA*

Why is it that I see daily pictures of burning villages, refugees and massacre victims in Kosovo and no pictures at all of Kurdish victims suffering far worse atrocities in Turkey? There are hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees. Their villages have been bombed and strafed by Turkish helicopters and jets supplied by the United States. Why are the Albanian separatists treated as freedom fighters in the US media, while the Kurdish guerrillas are called terrorists? Why is an independent Kosovo deemed good and an independent Kurdistan bad?

The media coverage reminds me of the situation MIT professor Noam Chomsky describes in his book, *Manufacturing Consent*. Chomsky points out that extensive coverage was given to enemy atrocities in Cambodia, while simultaneously there was a near complete blackout of coverage of US-supported atrocities in East Timor.

There is a logical explanation for the fact that a superpower like the United States is willing to use its air force in support of a guerrilla army. After the soviet Union and most of eastern Europe went capitalist, only one socialist state remained, Yugoslavia. Therefore, the breakup of Yugoslavia was very important to the United States and other capitalist countries.

The Kurdish guerrillas are leftist in political orientation. The last thing the United States would want to see in the oil-rich Middle east would be a socialist Kurdistan.

The prime motivating factor of US foreign policy is the preservation of capitalism and enhancement of corporate power and profits. The tender concern expressed by government officials and the media for refugees and victims of atrocities is for public consumption only.

GARY SUDBOROUGH

## TO THE CLASS OF 2002

*Wesleyan*

I'm running for sophomore representative on the Wesleyan Student Assembly. The WSA elections for next year offer the possibility of an efficient student government with clear goals and practical tactics to achieve those goals. I find the objectives of my fellow candidates noble, and share most of their ideas. The goal of community activism requires enthusiasm and foresight, but it also requires a budget. I am currently on the Student Budget Committee and I have watched how groups handle their funds over the year. What has surprised me is the lack of coordination between groups on overlapping issues. A common occurrence in budget meetings is that SBC members give groups ideas about where to get more funding from departments, other groups, *WesWELL*, etc. This practice often leads to confusion about actual budget requests, the ability to raise money, and overall inefficiency of the system. I think that the SBC should be more active in helping student group treasurers maximize their budget and campus resources. There needs to be communication with Dean Hill and President Benet about the status of discretionary funds, *WesWELL* and the Good Clean Fund, and Department Chairs. I intend to help *WESLEAD* offer a seminar on managing student groups' budgets over the upcoming academic year. I also think that allocation of funding for publications could be altered to assure a set number of issues so that the students working on the publication won't be caught without the money to publish. Since this year's SBC members will be drawing up the annual budget for next year's groups I will have a good understanding of Wesleyan's student organizations that will help Wesleyan work towards more dynamic campus activism. SEBASTIAN KAPLAN-SEARS '02

## VOTE FOR ME

*Wesleyan*

So, you've probably figured out that all is not well at Wesleyan, and as for our student government, the only upside there is that, at least as it is now, the WSA isn't quite as bad as an all Republican Congress would be. But why should you care? I mean, none of this really affects you, does it? Well, I'm a simple man who likes the simple pleasures: I like my beer cold, my chinese food MSG-free, and my Prada loafers with cap-toes. But I do have some concerns that might touch your lives a little more than food additives:

1. Eliminate the mandatory four-year meal plan.
2. Use the diverse environment at Wesleyan in ways that will enrich our community, not divide it.
3. Point out to the administration that if it spent approximately 3% per year of the University's endowment, we could all go here for free.
4. Try to ascertain Doug Benet's appeal.
5. Turn the Butterfields into senior dorms, and give the frosh the wood-frame houses. (Just fucking with ya.)
6. Create a robot that uses contractions. (Have you not noticed that robots do not ever use contractions?)

In all seriousness, the reason I am running for WSA vice-president is that I feel that Wesleyan is a great school, but that in the Administration's attempts to improve customer service, certain glaring issues have been neglected, including housing, the meal plan and sky-rocketing tuition. One of the biggest things we the students have to realize is that we are not just producers and consumers on this campus: we are a community. This is most important because in spite of all of our differences, it is more important than ever that we stick together to try to solve our common problems. The perfect forum for this is the WSA (or maybe Judge Judy).

DAVID PERLMAN



# HERMES INDEX

(With apologies to *Harper's Magazine*)

1. Percentage of people polled who thought the following factors were to blame for the recent shooting in Colorado.

Guns: 60%

Parents: 51%

TV, Music: 49%

Social Pressure: 43%

Internet: 34%

Media Coverage of other shootings: 34%

School System: 11%

2. Number of guns produced for the American market in 1990: 4.37 million

3. Number of children who died of gunshot wounds in 1990: 4,941 (538 accidentally)

4. Number of suicides committed by using guns among people aged 15-24 in 1990: 3,165

5. Percentage of murders committed with firearms in 1994: 70

6. Probability that use of a firearm in the home for protection will result in the death of a family member: 12:1

7. Percentage of federal gun tax revenues spent on care for victims of gun violence: 0

8. Percentage of federal gun tax revenues spent on hunting programs: 100

9. Percentage increase in the likelihood that you or someone you care about will be killed by a family member if there is a gun in the home: 300

10. Number of available Head Resident positions: 5

11. Number of applicants for Head Resident positions (including graduate students): 5

12. Approximate amount of money ResLife spends on House Manager positions annually: \$53,580

13. Number of acres of hemp grown in 1997 in the European Union: 50,000

14. Estimated place hemp would occupy in the ranking of U.S. farmers' cash crops: 2

15. Number of acres of hemp market demand could support being grown in the U.S.: 82,000

16. Number of travelers who pass through U.S. Customs each year: 69,000,000

17. Number of travelers subjected to some form of body search: 50,000

18. Number of travelers found carrying cocaine or heroin: 667

19. Average amount U.S. residents spent on legal drugs in 1987: \$167  
in 1997: \$320

20. Average monthly wage of a small-time crack cocaine dealer: \$200

21. Number of average American men a woman with no income of her own would have to marry to get above the poverty line: 2.3

22. Percent of American workforce receiving below-poverty-level wages: 30

23. Number of workers fired annually for trying to organize unions: 10,000

24. Percent of employers who threaten to shut down if workers unionize: 50%

25. Number of the world's largest economies that are global corporations: 51

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Sources: 1: CNN/USA Today/ Gallup Poll ([www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com)); 2-4: 7, The Carter Center ([www.arastar.org](http://www.arastar.org)); 5,6,8: Violence Policy Institute ([www.vpc.org](http://www.vpc.org)); 9-12: Anonymous Resident Advisor;  
13-14: Center of Business and Economic Research, Univ. of Kentucky; 15-19: Washington Times; 20: The Economist; 21-22: Barbara Ehrenreich; 23-25: Linda Chavez-Thompson; 26: <http://www.enviroweb.org/enviroissues/system/index.html>



# SKELETON IN THE CLOSET

Free at Last

AONGUS BURKE

The last time I wrote for *Hermes*, I noted how a lot of people who graduated with me in May of 1998 had found something missing in their 'real world' lives. After being out of school for a while they found themselves working less than fulfilling jobs, socializing away their free hours in bars, restaurants and clubs—more than one friend of mine had told me “I don't feel like a very interesting person right now.” It was something I had told myself, too.

One way I've tried to fill the void in my life was by reengaging in something that was a big part of my life at Wesleyan: activism, gay activism in particular. But the transition from activist at college to activist in New York City isn't exactly an obvious one.

**Most of the gay organizations in New York work on getting candidates elected to political office. How would my training as a Queer Alliance chalker be usable in that context?**

Throughout last summer I occasionally pondered the options that were available to me. What kinds of organizations were around in the city? How could I get involved with them? The really cool organizations like Queer Nation and ACT UP! have been in decline for many years, and I wasn't sure I was up to the job of reviving them. Most of the more secure gay organizations that exist in New York primarily work on getting candidates elected to political office. Now how would my training as a Queer Alliance chalker be usable in that context? Frankly, I think most electoral politics are a big bore and I wasn't about to spend my free time licking envelopes for a candidate whose pitch to the gay community might as well be “I may laugh at gay marriage, but I'm still the lesser of two evils.”

As it turned out, activism would end up finding me—and perhaps changing the course of my life forever. I didn't know this when a mysterious person named Nazareno Fontanilla sent me an email sometime this past September. He told me that he was a current student at Regis High School, my other alma mater, and that he had heard that I was interested in lending support as an alumnus to the formation of a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) there.

I had received an email from another Regis alum named Sam Martinez back in March of 1998. It was actually a mass email; he had sent it to everyone who had an email address listed on some unofficial Regis homepage. To make a long story short, he told us all that he was a big queer now and that he wanted to help out other gay students currently at Regis. Regis, by the way, is an all-boys, Catholic school in Manhattan. It's an oppressively homophobic institution. If I believed in God, I would thank It every day for making me too repressed and naive in high school to recognize what a faggot I was and too straight-acting for others to

catch on.

But I'm a militant homo now and thought that it might be fun to launch a massive and nasty letter-writing attack on the school's administration. Sam's efforts that spring had buckled under the weight of his workload at Haverford, but after Naz's email, I got back in touch with Sam and asked for email addresses of all of those who had expressed interest in his mission. After securing their permission, he forwarded them on to me and we were on our way.

Working in conjunction with Naz, I harassed people on the mailing list to write letters to the administration in support of the formation of a GSA or some other type of support group for gay kids at Regis. I wrote one myself of course, and in true Queer Alliance style blasted the Regis administration for being “murderously complicit” in the atrocious suicide rates that have been documented for gay teens in this country. Rhetorical overkill perhaps, but I trusted that others would write less antagonistic letters, and a few did. Besides, I eventually met with a few administrators and was much more pleasant. Honest.

We didn't exactly accomplish what we had hoped to do. I somehow had expected that the administration of the school would be more enlightened than the students I had known, but what can you really expect from a bunch of fools ruled by an ideology as oppressive as Catholicism anyway? I like to focus on what we did accomplish. The faculty at Regis has been instructed that they have a responsibility not to perpetuate homophobic attitudes and stereotypes and that they must intervene when they see them inflicted on students. A senior elective on human sexuality is in the works. And we, like, you know, got a dialogue going.

What the whole saga reminded me of is how getting involved in activist work introduces you to a whole new world of people and thinking that is often quite exhilarating. Naz turned out to be a remarkable young guy who has the balls to be out at a place like Regis. I made sure he applied to Wesleyan. Some of the other people I met were almost as remarkable. One was a guy by the name of John D'Emilio. You know John—he only wrote *Sexual Politics*, *Sexual Communities*, the definitive history of the

**Last week I actually stripped down to a towel and passed out some recruitment cards at a gay sex club in Chelsea.**

gay movement in the U.S., and, like, a dozen other things I cited in my thesis. Same with Peter Nardi, another gay studies scholar who graduated from Regis. They both got in touch with me by email and ended up writing some pissed-off letters of their own. I've since met John in person a couple of times and Peter will be visiting me in New York soon too. By the way, does anyone



know the email address of Bill Condon? He just won an Oscar for best adapted screenplay for *Gods and Monsters* and he's a gay Regis grad too!

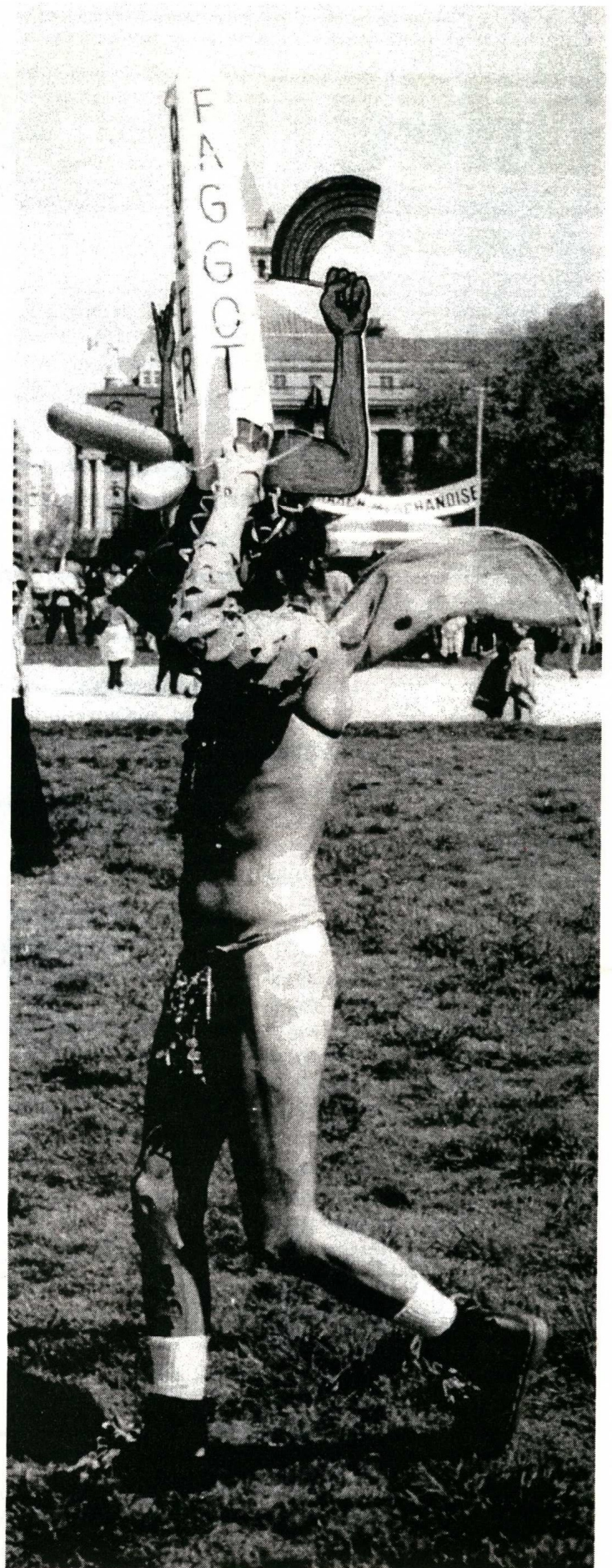
Alright, that's enough free advertising for a high school I don't think that much of. But the story doesn't end there. The whole Regis saga reminded me of how much I enjoyed activism while I was at Wes and how I really ought to be doing something I felt passionate about for a living, not working for The Man at a corporate law firm. As a result, I began a casual search for jobs in the less-than-booming world of gay activism. By February I had landed a job with the Center for HIV/AIDS Educational Studies and Training (CHEST) at New Jersey City University. I'm now working as the assistant field coordinator on two studies of HIV+ gay men. And while it's too early to make any definitive statements, I'm pretty happy. I like the people I work with, enjoy the less formal environment, and find most of the work interesting. Last week I actually stripped down to a towel and passed out some recruitment cards at a gay sex club in Chelsea. Even when I'm stuck with some of the less interesting work I actually care enough about what I'm doing to make an effort.

On top of that, I've also scored a gig as a monthly columnist with the *Washington Blade*, a gay paper in D.C. I'm in the midst of a three-month trial run before they decide whether they want to keep me on as a regular columnist. Wish me luck.

This story has such a happy ending I can hardly blame anyone who might be puking right now. But, as I wrap up my *Hermes* career a year too late, I hope you'll bear with me for another couple of paragraphs. I have hoped that my "Skeleton in the Closet" column would give current Wes students an opportunity to get a sustained look at what life is like in the real world before they actually get thrown into it themselves. One year later, here are some of my tentative conclusions:

The real world is as much of a learning experience as college ever was. For the first time in my life, I'm really responsible for myself and for my happiness. I can't rely on school to provide me with intellectual stimulation, friends, or the means by which I measure the progress I'm making. To larger extent than ever, where the day takes me is up to me. I never before really understood that that's what it's like to be a real adult and how much scarier it all is than my parents ever let on. But I think I've done a decent job so far.

For those of you who are heading off into that real world now, I wish you all the best of luck. I respect those of you who will be doing things like activism, advocacy, teaching or anything else that helps your fellow human beings. I hope you find your work fulfilling, your co-workers stimulating and your apartments inhabitable. For those headed for corporate law firms, consulting agencies and investment banks, don't feel too guilty about it. The money is good and can buy you some of the security that you probably need right now. Just don't stay there too long if and when you learn that it's not the world for you. There are few things worse than being stuck doing something you've come to learn isn't for you. It's something I learned in the last year. I worked at a corporate law firm for eight months, only to realize that all the money I earned didn't make up for the fact that the work was completely uninspiring. I don't regret it at all. I'm just glad I learned it now. ☺





# SHOOTIN' BLANKS

THE UNFORGIVEABLE STUPIDITY OF GUN NUTS

by Ben Oppenheim

As the recent massacre in Colorado so clearly demonstrated, America has a serious violence problem. And while a sizeable portion of Americans would probably like to blame the media, the Internet, satanic death metal, or one of the other usual suspects, I think that it's time that we took a look at just what actually killed those 15 people: guns. Yes, the gun, America's sweetheart, is the culprit not just here, but in tens of thousands of killings all across America. But instead of rehashing the usual arguments over gun control, I'd like to take a look at the heart of the problem: the perennially misinterpreted Second Amendment.

Gun nuts nearly always claim the Second Amendment is their carte-blanche to own heat-seeking anti-tank artillery and other toys. And the American public lets them make that claim. Most people, when asked what rights the Second Amendment grants us, will parrot back "the right to bear arms." Which is not what the amendment really says. The actual article is as follows: "A well regulated Militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed." Now, does this say that we can own teflon-coated "cop-killer" bullets? No. Does it sanction the use of firearms for self-defense? No. Does it even imply that every American has the right to own a weapon? No. What it does state is that the people have the right to bear arms in a well-regulated militia for the purposes of defending the state.

That last part tends to get ignored in the debate over gun control, but I'd argue that it's the crux of the matter. After all, when our fledgling nation was founded, there was no real national army,

only an odd collection of farmers, merchants, and other citizens acting as a militia. It made complete sense, then, for the government to sanction the right to keep and bear arms in a militia, because it was expected that such a militia would form

**Gun nuts claim the Second Amendment is their carte-blanche to own heat-seeking anti-tank artillery. And the American public lets them.**

the backbone of our nation's defense. A professional standing army, which we have come to view as simply another arm of our government, is a relatively new concept historically. In fact, the United

(and again in Vietnam). To make a long story short, the idea of a professional army was totally foreign to America's founders, and the Second Amendment reflects that fact.

Of course, we have an army that takes care of national defense now, making the Second Amendment's militia somewhat obsolete. Nonetheless, many gun owners point to their imagined "right to bear arms" as though it were the glue holding our fragile union together (or, in more extreme cases, as the only thing keeping the evil, godless Federal Government from enslaving all of us). Just think about the modern militias that claim they are following the dictates of the Second Amendment: the Michigan militia, the Montana militia, the California-Mexican Army, etc. These are the folks who dress in camouflage uniforms on the weekends and crawl around in the forest "training" so that when the black helicopters from the U.N. come around, they'll be ready. Not to put too fine a point on this, but these militias are neither "well-regulated" (the government having no control over or official contact with any of them) nor going to "defend the state" anytime soon (that job being reserved for the aforementioned armed forces we happen to have).

Whether or not you agree with gun control or government regulations, the simple fact is that the Second Amendment in no way permits our citizens to arm themselves to the teeth. In reality, it's little more than an archaic reminder of a nation that no longer exists; and as we prepare to enter the 21st century it's a problem that we need to address. As long as the absurd idea that every citizen is entitled to the right to "keep and bear" a small army's worth of guns continues, we as a society will never be safe. ☸

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**INTRATEC FIREARMS**

**Your Choice Keeps America Working.**

**100% GENUINE AMERICAN**

Several of the guns used in the recent massacre in Colorado were manufactured by Intratec—a company with some rather dubious credentials.

Intratec's marketing practices are very much geared toward dumping arms on the black market, and its advertisements link guns to sex and gratuitous violence—the dealer's advertising copy has bragged that Intratec's guns are "as tough as your toughest customers." Copy for the Tec-22 proclaimed that "only your imagination limits your fun!"

Intratec is best known for its inexpensive assault pistols. Intratec used to offer the TEC-9 assault pistol. When 1989 California legislation banned that weapon *by name*, Intratec renamed it to get around the law. It offered six models of the TEC-DC9 assault pistol until the 1994 federal assault weapons ban.

In April 1991 the National Rifle Association's *American Rifleman* ran a notice advising owners of Intratec's TEC-22 Scorpion that "a flawed part may cause these guns to function full automatic." The company issued no recall for the weapons. Flawed, my ass. ☹



# BEAUTY IS A BEAST

## THE BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF BEAUTY

by Eric E. Kushins

I'm short. That's my major physical flaw. As a result, I may get paid less at work and find it more difficult to get a date. Since I'm not searching for a job, but looking for a girl, I would like to enumerate several benefits for dating a short man. Short men are more likely to withstand famine, less likely to slip on ice, and valued for their agility as lovers. Also, lest "mismatched couples," be concerned, a study of 312 subjects aged 21-89 years found no relation between men's skeletal framework and penis size. So just because certain men may be vertically challenged, doesn't mean they are vertically challenged.

"It's what's on the inside that counts." "Don't judge a book by its cover." "Beauty is only skin deep." If anyone has ever used these hackneyed sayings on you they obviously fear loneliness. The truth is, looks matter. Studies and experience prove that one's physical beauty affects friendships, marriage, and employment.

Our norms of beauty may be a way to

pick good breeders. According to Geoffrey Cowley of Newsweek, penguins do not choose their mates randomly—females look for chubbier males who have enough fat to spend several weeks sitting on newly laid eggs. Likewise, humans search for particular characteristics in their mates. Studies show humans are attracted to health, cleanliness, and symmetry. Psychologist Steven Gangestad

and women with greater symmetry have a greater number of sex partners. A study of 86 couples found that women with highly symmetrical partners are more than two times as likely to climax during intercourse.

The ideal female has a high forehead, full lips, short jaw, and small chin and nose. A tiny jaw indicates more estrogen which means greater chance of fertility.

**Why do some colleges ask you to attach a picture with the application? Is it so the admissions can match you with your accomplishments? Hell no—colleges want a good looking student body**

and biologist Randy Thronhill studied symmetry of college students using various measurements. They had students fill out questionnaires covering everything from temperament to sexual behavior. The most symmetrical males started having sex three to four years earlier than their lopsided counterparts. Thus, men

Men also seek women with an hour glass shape—this figure is ideal for pregnancy and breast-feeding. The opposite is ideal in men: a big jaw, a strong chin, and an imposing brow. Cowley notes that males with this type of heavy lower face are ideal because they most likely have a greater amount of testosterone and can be better spear throwers and food gatherers.

Studies with babies of different backgrounds concluded that babies stared at pictures of what adults consider good-looking people longer than uglier people, disproving the idea that we get our standards of beauty from media. In fact, standards of beauty transcend people of different ethnic groups. When researchers of the University of Louisville showed a diverse collection of faces to Whites, Asians, and Latinos of all ages from thirteen countries, the subjects' ethnic background scarcely affected their preferences. So how do we explain today's standard of beauty? We must take fashion into account. Today the cocaine-addicted anorexic waif look is in. Tomorrow, the Kalahari lip plug look may be in vogue. One cannot forget that ideas of appeal change with time, yet certain "rules" will always remain. In spite of the fact that





little boys, I do believe that the hourglass figure is still more appealing to most. There are plenty of Betty Page and Raquel Welch pin-ups, but I have never heard of a Kate Moss pin-up.

Height dramatically affects one's relationships and employment. Many people think that tall people are strong and imposing, and short people are benevolent and more likeable. (Note: I've seen midget mud wrestling and those gnomes can really duke it out!) Most equate height with importance and influence. (Ralph Keyes, author of *The Height of Your Life*, discovered that as Christmas approaches, kids draw Santa Claus increasingly larger.) Consequently, taller people often have big advantages in life. Dr. David B. Allen and colleagues from the University of Wisconsin Medical School cited one study of business school graduates and found graduates more than six feet tall receive starting salaries 12% higher than their shorter classmates. Evidently, men get a \$500-per-inch salary bonus in the range between 5'6" and 6'3". Why should height affect salary? The problem appears psychological. When we are babies giants tell us what to do. Thus, a short client may sway towards the proposals of a tall businessman because of a subconscious feeling that the tall businessman knows what's best.

There are many present-day examples that demonstrate the power of beauty. It is not a coincidence that most movie stars, singers, news reporters, and other highly public figures fit society's norms of beauty. Matt Lauer's looks have definitely boosted the Today show's ratings. President Clinton has been called extremely sexual by everyone from Anne Rice to Monica Lewinsky. Why do you think some colleges ask you to attach a picture of yourself to the application? Is it so that Admissions can match your face to your accomplishments when they "see you around"? Hell no—colleges want a good looking student body. And what university wouldn't want a beautiful people, especially since an abundance of studies have proven a link between good looks and successful careers. Universities are investing in good looks in hope of achieving future contributions from successful alumni/ae. ☺

# WESlang

Compiled by Eric Kushins

"Diversity University," has always meant diversity of ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, etc. But, what about speech? Communication is vital to success, but what happens when we don't understand each other? I have thoughtfully compiled a list of slang defined by contributors from both coasts of the country (and the places in between that try to imitate them). David Perlman, WSA vice president candidate, wrote out sentences incorporating each word into the Wesleyan experiences. Memorize, learn, and practice these terms with your friends and those people who sit next to you in class during those damn awkward pauses. They may even help at a job interview, if they're not already impressed enough with your sociology major.

**amp** v. 1. to blow out of proportion 2. to get hyped; pumped; juiced. *I'm totally amped about living in the one room triple at the Bayit next year.*

**bag** v. 1. to steal. 2. to jump someone belligerently. *Oh, it's snowing outside; let's bag some Mocon trays and sled down Foss Hill.*

**beef** n. problem; "issue". *You mean to tell me people have beef with tuition here? It's so cheap.*

**brick** adj. 1. COLD. 2. freezing, as in temperature. *Damn, Sci-Li is mad brick.*

**champion** n. a real winner (sarcastic). *Did you see that champion break dancing at Psi-U?*

**chickenhead** n. 1. someone (usually female) who gets taken advantage of either physically or mentally. 2. someone who acts stupid or dirty. 3. female who likes to perform fellatio. *Yeh, and did you see that chickenhead that got with him?*

**the dealy** n. 1. what's going on 2. what's up. *What's the dealy with the Argus Comix?*

**derb** n. 1. BLOWJOB. 2. road derb, blowjob while driving. *I got derb and a bread bowl all in one night... what a school!*

**grill** n. 1. FACE; HEAD 2. v. to look at someone hard; glare; stare. *Damn Doug Bennet, why you grilling my girl?*

**head whop** n. BLOWJOB. *I got a head whop from the Middletown Senior Center.*

**ice** n. diamond jewelry. *Why's he getting financial aid? He's got all that ice.*

**janky** v. 1. to act uncouthly for no reason 2. to act absurd for extra measure. *That was janky when that dude took the first hit and didn't even pay.*

**randy** n. a random person. *Who's that randy that your girlfriend was with last night?*

**scrub** n. 1. someone who sucks at something; i.e. sports. 2. a guy who thinks he is fly but gets no women. 3. v. to fall; to bite it. *Hey scrub, Williams is the place for you.*

**shady** adj. SKETCHY; questionable. *The Gatekeeper on Wednesday night is just a smidgen shady.*

**snuff** v. to punch lightly. *If escort doesn't come soon, I'm going to have to snuff the driver.*

**splash off** v. ejaculate without a condom. *I splashed off in a pre-frosh over WesFest.*

**trip** v. to act stupid for no apparent reason. *Barbara Jan-Wilson was trippin' when she supported that "Independent Ivy" drivel.*

**wack** adj. something bad. *There was no beer at Westonecoldsobor; golly, that was wack.*

We're going to try to get this one started, something distinctly Wesleyan:

**##-7 (pound-pound-seven)** adj. so boring as to merit deletion. *God, when some tell long stories, it's like, ##-7.*

Contributors: Ruben Rivera, Amanda Sells, Ricardo Singer, Adam Nelson, Jillian Cristofalo



# POT PILLS

## THE FIGHT FOR MEDICINAL MARIJUANA PICKS UP STEAM

by Adam Hurter

On February 14, the federal government released a report by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) stating that marijuana has many medicinal uses, though the results did not show nearly as many benefits as many past independent studies. The \$896,000 study was an embarrassment to the government, and particularly to U.S. "drug czar" Barry McCaffrey.

McCaffrey, a retired Army General, has waged war on medicinal marijuana for years. He's blown off legitimate studies by referring to their results as a "Cheech and Chong show," referring to the famous pair who helped glorify pot use. He's said that the battle for medicinal marijuana is based on the lies of "aging hippies" and potheads whose real motive is to fully legalize the drug for all use. Now his own study has proven that McCaffrey is wrong about medicinal marijuana.

The IOM is an independent non-profit organization that advises the U.S. government on medical matters. Though its comprehensive report was worded conservatively, it clearly stated that pot has many real medical uses and urged further study. The IOM also reported finding no evidence that marijuana acts as the proverbial "gateway drug" that drug war propaganda alleges it to be.

Dr. John Benson, a member of the research team, said, "There are limited circumstances in which we see recommending smoked marijuana for medical uses."

Reports of the study's findings were all over the mainstream press the following day. USA Today titled its article "Medical Marijuana Nears Mainstream" and printed a picture of marijuana being poured from a bottle into an outstretched hand on the front page. Most of the media ate it up; the more conservative faction voiced skepticism. Everyone, however, agreed that a major government study on the issue was long overdue.

Why did it take so long for the government to fund a real study on medicinal marijuana? It knew the conclusions that would result, and it was scared of losing a small battle in the war on drugs. As recently as last year the government used economic tactics to keep states from putting medicinal marijuana initiatives on the ballot. Until now, the government could dismiss demands for medicinal marijuana by saying that not enough scientific research had been

done on the subject, that most evidence of pot's medicinal value was "anecdotal."

The concept of marijuana having great medical use shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone. The drug has been used as medicine for centuries by many different cultures. In 1993 Harvard Medical School Doctor Lester Grinspoon, whom the IOM would later ask to review its report, published "Marihuana: the Forbidden Medicine," which described marijuana's uses at length.

Two years ago Grinspoon and James Bakalar released a report titled "Marihuana: an old Medicine of the Future." They wrote, "Cannabis is a strikingly safe, versatile and potentially inexpensive medicine."

"When we reviewed its medical uses in 1993 after examining many patients and case histories, we were able to list the following: nausea and vomiting in cancer chemotherapy, the weight loss symptom of AIDS, glaucoma, epilepsy, muscle spasms and chronic pain in multiple sclerosis, quadriplegia and other spastic disorders, migraine severe pruritus depression and other mood disorders. Since then we have identified more than a dozen others, including asthma, insomnia, dystonia, scleroderma, Crohn's disease, diabetic gastroparesis and terminal illness."

The recent IOM report didn't give marijuana nearly as much credit. "Marijuana is primarily advocated as a relief from the symptoms of disease, rather than a cure," it says. The study did find uses for marijuana in some of the areas where it is popularly thought that the drug has benefits: cancer pain and chemotherapy side effects. In reference to cancer pain, the study stated, "The most encouraging clinical data on the effects of cannabinoids on chronic pain are from three methodologically sound studies on cancer pain." The report confirmed, however hesitantly, common knowledge that marijuana can help chemotherapy patients. "Cannabinoids are mildly effective in preventing emesis in some patients receiving cancer chemotherapy."

A THC concentrate known as Marinol is actually already available in pill form by prescription. Marinol, however, has problems. One is that patients can't regulate dosage; ironically enough, many report getting way too high. More importantly, Marinol doesn't have all of marijuana's positive medical effects. Yet the government pushed the potential of non-smoked marijuana immediately after the report.

The IOM report claims that smoked marijuana, because smoking has other harmful effects, may not be where the future of cannabis as medicine lies.

McCaffrey made sure the media got that message: "You should not expect to go into an ICU (intensive care unit) in 15 years and find someone with a 'blunt' stuck in his face as a plan-management tool," he said.

As McCaffrey tries his hardest to push his hard-line stance on marijuana, he is losing ground rather rapidly. Across the country polls show that 60-70% of the public supports legalizing marijuana for medicinal purposes.

And states are beginning to take initiative themselves. Voters in Alaska, Oregon, Nevada and Washington passed medicinal marijuana ballot initiatives, much to the dismay of the federal government.

Arizona reaffirmed a medical marijuana initiative passed two years ago. But it's clearly not this simple. After years, voters in Washington D.C. got the right to vote on medical marijuana. They were finally granted that right, but, in an unprecedented move, the federal government refused to let the ballots be counted. Unofficial pollsters outside the voting room determined that nearly 70% of the voters supported the initiative.

California caused a national raucous in 1996 when it passed Proposition 215, legalizing medicinal marijuana. The federal government did its best to raise hell in the state, by shutting down clinics and arresting patients. Things got so confusing that patients with a physician's note didn't know if they were going to get arrested. Many turned back to the black market.

Will the new IOM study force the federal government to change its stance? Probably not. What it will take is an even stronger grassroots political movement. In the course of the drug war, state and individual rights have been trampled. No, we don't have to put up with this. ●

*For more information on the medicinal uses of marijuana, a copy of the full IOM report and up to date news on the progression of the medicinal marijuana movement, visit the web site of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) at [www.norml.org](http://www.norml.org).*



# UPWARD MOBILITY

## REFLECTIONS ON THE END OF A DREAM

by MC Chan

It is 9:30pm on a beautiful Wednesday night. I should be studying for an exam. I could be hanging out with my friends, working at the library, or simply catching up on some sleep. Instead I sit in Russell House, transfixed, as an 86 year-old woman points out exactly what is wrong with me.

The woman: Ms. Grace Lee Boggs, the keynote speaker for Asian Awareness Month. A woman who has spent her whole life fighting the establishment, first in the Black movement, and later, in the Asian-American movement. A woman whose fire burns so bright that, even today, she is still struggling against the system. She is working with children in Detroit, trying to help them take charge of the world around them. She is, without doubt, an activist. A woman whom I respect.

So, when Ms. Boggs scolded me, I paid attention. She said, quite frankly, that we young people today are spoiled. We have too much; too much comfort, too many material goods, too many material needs, too much everything from the system we live in. Our goals in life are thus limited by what we want out of this system. We do not have the vision, the dreams, that the youth of previous generations had. We cannot envision changes that will bring about more social equity. We do not know how to dream.

This is perhaps a speech that we have all heard before. The typical "You-young-uns-these-days-have-it-too-easy" speech. Its the one delivered by our grandparents when they are in one of their nostalgic moods, by that strange gym teacher who has a glass eye from 'Nam', by the older sibling who is going to Harvard and takes himself way too seriously. The speech all the old folks have for us "young 'uns".

The difference between this speech and all the others however, is that this one

touched me. At the end of her speech, I sat thinking that perhaps, just perhaps, she is right. When I came to this college many months ago, I had a set goal for my life. I was going to work hard, and achieve some measure of economic success higher than that which my parents had achieved. Back then, I did not even know there was a name for this goal: Upward Mobility. My parents are mover-uppers. They were both born poor. They work hard to ensure that their children are given better opportunities than they. For that, I can only thank them as I would not be here if not for them. However, there is only so much one can do with a government-service salary, no matter how hard one saves. I promised myself that my children would have the opportunities that I never got. The dreams, of the parents became the dreams, of the child. I would work hard within the system, and I would succeed.

Activism. Frankly, there was a time in my life when I barely knew what that meant. It was not really my fault. I come from a country where social and political activists are placed under arrest without trial or possibility of parole. The Internal Security Act grants the power to arrest without warrant and incarcerate without leave lies solely in the hands of the police. The law has been in effect since our wonderful British colonizers left us (ah, we are so fortunate to have been left the gift of modern civilization by gentle and good-willed people). Just before I left my own country and came here, two bank employees were arrested under this law simply because they had sent out an e-mail which warned of impending riots by migrant workers in the capital city. Of course, the law is only the tip of the iceberg. Perhaps the greatest tool of repression (and it is difficult for me, even now, to say that we were repressed) was education. An education system that stifles free thought and

where the history books are written by bureaucrats. I can still remember the many conversations I had with my friends about the state our country was in. We recognized that the system was flawed, that there were aspects of it that was just plain unfair. We were all intelligent people, but I cannot remember ever talking about what we could do to change the situation. I doubt if any of us believed that we could; the system was something we lived in, and all our dreams were confined within it.

Perhaps these are mere excuses for inaction. After all, there are people in other parts of the world who face far greater repression than we did. They fought back, and still do so to this day. I think the difference was the economy. Like many other Asian countries in the early '90's, our economy was booming. It is a sad fact that no country has ever had a revolution when the people have a opportunity to make money. Perhaps the eventual collapse of the Asian economic boom was a blessing in disguise (ah, those international traders had only our social well-being at heart after all, bless their scheming little hearts).

So, what is my point? Simply that the certainties which I carried with me to Wesleyan are no longer there. I can no longer completely believe that upward mobility will give myself and my children a better future in my country. Much of this doubt comes from meeting activists like Ms. Boggs. People who not only see that there are problems, with the current political, social or economic system in which they live, but also believe there is an alternative to the system. They believe that by their own actions, they can help to bring this alternative to fruition. I know that there has to be an alternative in my country. Very recently, I have even begun to hear of others who fight for this alternative. The question then: Do I believe in the alternative enough to work for it? Am I brave enough? I do not know... I do not know. ●

**Frankly, there was a time in my life when I hardly knew what "activism" meant.**



# FIGHTING POWER

## CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY VS. ALL-OUT REVOLUTION

by Nikki Diaz

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* Max Weber includes an anecdote illustrating how the modern capitalist system can be set in motion by a single individual. In his example there are a group of guys who own sheep and sell the wool at the marketplace. They hang out, they drink beer. They sell wool. Then, one guy thinks to himself, hey if I work a bit harder and lower my prices, then I can sell more wool than ever. Now maybe he doesn't hang out at the local bar so much because he's always busy working. His switch from quality of life to quantity of money leads to a shift in the entire value system. Now all his old buddies have either got to increase their level of production or be content with a lowered standard of living. Welcome to the rat race.

Modern capitalism is more than just a form of economic organization. Weber points out that capitalism has been around for a while in many different places. He makes a clear distinction between these capitalist economies and modern capitalism. The economic system

of capitalism does not necessarily imply the work ethic which characterizes modern capitalism. Society has undergone the same shift which it witnessed in miniature in the above story. Material values are placed above all else. Now, you might read this and say, "Well, I'm not only materialistic; I place a lot of value on my family and leisure time and going to the local bar". Yet we operate as members of a larger structure which has profit as its motto. Profit is measured in dollars; success is judged by purely economic terms (quite literally in the form of the GDP, which is used to gauge a country's health). The individual is indoctrinated into the work ethic through the cumulative effect of reward and punishment doled out by the system. It becomes increasingly likely that money will be the top priority, for it gets economically and spiritually harder to promote other values in a competitive environment. Modern capitalism is locked into a cycle of greed.

Now the question is this: Can capitalism as an economic form have new values

incorporated into it, or must revolution occur before we escape moral capitalism?

The side that says capitalism can be altered without revolution includes the self-reliance movement and the corporate accountability movement. That is not to say that individuals within those groups aren't opposed to capitalism, simply that those movements do not specifically call for the end of capitalism.

The basic theme of self-reliance might

be termed as an economic turn towards the local, based on the belief that human-scale communities promote ecologically-friendly practices and a rich spiritual atmosphere. The E.F. Schumacher Institute, named after the author of *Small is Beautiful:*

**The corporate accountability movement is based on the idea that if enough people organize corporations will have to change their values.**

*Economics as if People Mattered* states that "both social and environmental sustainability can be achieved by applying the values of human-scale communities and respect for the natural environment to economic issues" (for more, check out [http://www.schumachersocietyorg/frame-set\\_about.html](http://www.schumachersocietyorg/frame-set_about.html)). They promote efforts such as local currencies, community land trusts, and general action against mega-corporations. Schumacher raises the question, "What is the meaning of democracy, freedom, human dignity, standard of living, self-realization, fulfillment? Is it a matter of goods, or of people? Of course it is a matter of people. But people can be themselves only in small comprehensible groups." In other words, values other than profit and self-interest can be incorporated into the capitalist framework, but only within the context of a human-scale community. If this view interests you I would read Schumacher's book, as well as *A Case Against the Global Economy: And for a Turn Towards the Local*, edited by





Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith. If you would like to participate in a conference hosted by the Schumacher Society, there's one on local currency on June 11-12 in Chicago as well as a conference on ecology and community on June 21-4 in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Finally the E.F. Schumacher Annual Lectures will be held in Salsbury, Connecticut on October 23.

The corporate accountability movement aims the fight at the other end of the scale, with its eyes trained on big business rather than small communities. It is based upon the idea that if enough people are well-organized the call for alternative values will be so loud that large corporations will be unable to ignore it. This movement includes watchdog groups, labor unions, and generally any effort to equalize corporate power and people power. The actions taken by the corporate accountability movement can run the gamut from boycotts and strikes to simply publicizing information about corporate practices. New information technology is a particularly powerful tool here, as it allows a (mostly) decentralized and unregulated information source, as well as a means for almost instantaneous information transfer. According to the corporate accountability movement, alternative values can be incorporated into the capitalist structure, but only if the people advocate for them. A really informative website is the Corporate Accountability Project at <http://www.corporations.org>, which includes dirt on specific corporations, information on how corporations are affecting education and the state, and practical resources for activists, such as how to hold a teach-in. Locally, groups such as USLAC and E3 do work related to corporate accountability, and the Economic Action Coalition specifically addresses the economic policy of Wesleyan.

Others feel that the tide of modern capitalism can't be reversed. The profit motive ultimately can't be tempered by accountability nor by a movement towards the local. This growing international alliance

of people who have grievances with capitalism will eventually result in a power that will be used not to change capitalism, but to overthrow it. Already there have been "proletarian protests". May 16-20, 1998 witnessed transnational action which was "autonomously organized yet globally coordinated against the leaders of the World Trade Organization and the G8 world leaders. The events ranged from 50,000 landless peasants on the streets of Brasilia to 30 simultaneous street parties across the globe, to 50,000 people on the streets of Hyderabad in India." I got this information off of <http://www.gn.apc.org/june18/>, which is the web site dedicated to the June 18 protests which are going down this year. This is the date when G8 (the alliance of

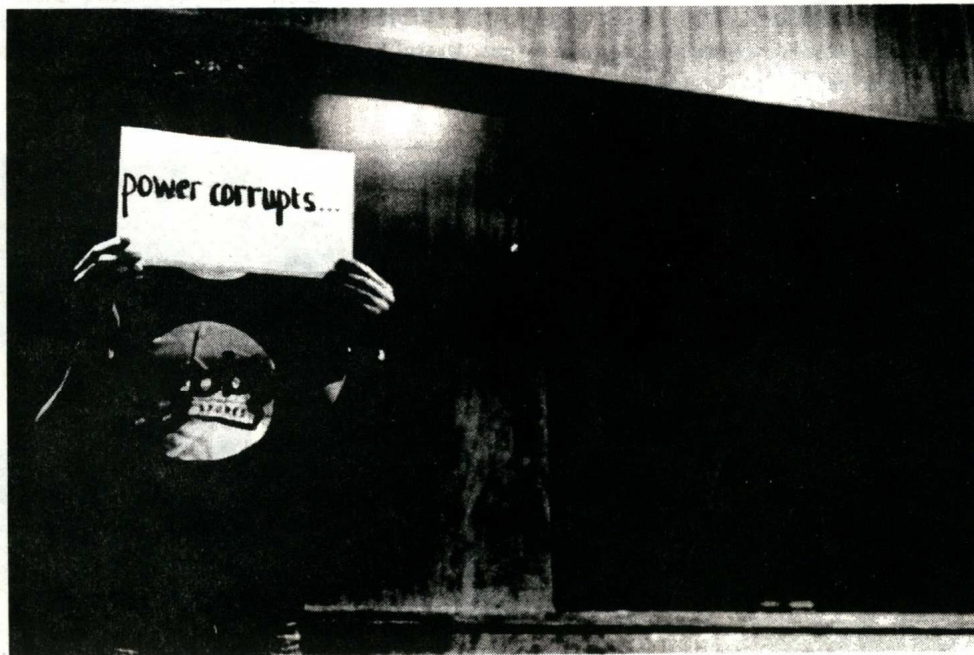
**Others feel that the tide of modern capitalism can't be reversed—they don't want to change capitalism, they want to overthrow it.**

the eight major industrialized powers) will meet in Koln, Germany. The protests are to be held in major financial centers across the world and will involve parties, flyers, puppetry, flying pies, teach-ins, "hacktivism", carnivals, occupations, and whatever else they can think of. It is hoped that many different organizations will be represented, such as groups representing indigenous people, women's groups, environmentalists, and whoever else has realized that "the global capitalist system, based on the exploitation of people and

the planet for the profit of a few, is at the root of our social and ecological troubles." I know there will be protests in Boston and New York. There will be a planning meeting for the Boston protests on May 1; I'm not sure about New York. If there's not one going on in your home town, start one. People will also be protesting at the World Trade Organization's Fourth Ministerial Conference in Seattle on Nov. 29th- Dec 3.

I said before that the fight against global capitalism is one of values. This is a fight to have the progress of our world measured not by the dollars in Shell's purse, but gauged by the actual condition of the people and the planet. It's not so much whether or not you think the system should be toppled or merely altered. The important thing is for people to join in solidarity, so that their values power for women, protection of the earth, or less work are taken into account. It is a fight in which the people start to take the system back into their own hands. However, it requires the individual-you-to start thinking of yourself as not only an individual, but as a vital part in the much larger framework of capitalism. Now the question is: where do you want to position yourself in that system? ☸

*Please feel free to contact me if you want more information regarding any of the events or groups listed here, if you want to carpool, or if you just want to talk. Nikki Diaz x5028, [ndiaz@wesleyan.edu](mailto:ndiaz@wesleyan.edu).*





# ACTIVISM ROUNDUP

COMPILED BY CHRIS VANCE AND MC CHAN

## Students Around the World Protest NATO Bombings

According to Yugoslav sources, over 800,000 students' schools are closed because of NATO bombings. Over 150 schools across the Balkans were destroyed or damaged by NATO bombs in late March and early April.

The Yugoslav Students' Union asks students from NATO countries "to forget [all] official opinions of their governments and start [a] human campaign against bombing!" Students in Serbia testified to the International Union of Students that NATO bombs kill civilians and destroy non-military buildings: "If this continues, there will be more blood on both sides and only the innocent will suffer."

NATO admits many of its bombs and cruise missiles use depleted uranium, which will continue to injure and kill people years after detonation. According to Dr. Rosalie Bertell, who is both a radiobiologist and president of the International Institute of Concern for Public Health, depleted uranium is "most likely a major contributor" to syndromatic chronic illness in Iraq since the Gulf War.

Protests against NATO bombings continue, include hundreds of thousands of demonstrators across Europe, North America, Southern Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The Canadian Federation of Students has formally encouraged all its locals to organize against the bombings.

sources: Yugoslav Students Union via International Union of Students <http://www.stud.uni-hannover.de/archiv/ius-1> and Academic Information Network <http://www.aim.ac.yu>

## Mexican Students Plan General Strike

Students at the National Autonomous University of Mexico are considering a general strike against fee increases, to build on the two one-day strikes they staged in March.

The autonomous University used to be free, but on March 15 (after this year's state cutbacks) the administration secretly

approved fee increases. The 1,020 peso fee (approximately \$100 US) will be equivalent to 30 days' pay at minimum wage in Mexico, and between 65 and 79 percent of Mexicans live in poverty.

Electrical workers protesting privatization and Zapatistas opposing low-intensity warfare have shown solidarity for the student strikes. These "collaborations" "stirred up" students a large majority voted for the March 24 strike which closed ninety-five percent of campus facilities.

source: Jeremy Simer, *Mexican Labor News and Analysis* <http://www.igc.apc.org/unitedelect>

## Nicaraguan Students Continue Actions For Funding

This spring students in Nicaragua increased pressure on the state to boost university funding. The Nicaraguan constitution requires that six percent of the national budget go to universities, but funding has fallen far short of that since 1992. Widespread student protests are all that's kept funding near its former levels.

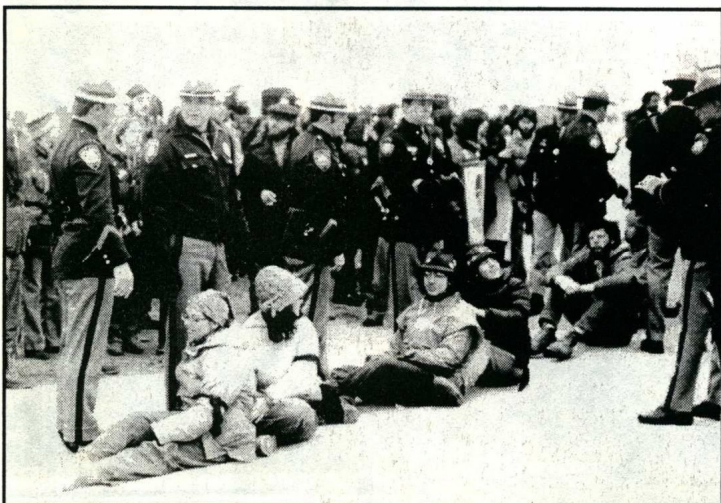
A lively student protest on April 9 in Managua won support from residents but ended in a riot. Police threw tear gas on the streets and in peoples' homes; they also destroyed the students' sound system. Demonstrators threw rocks at police and allegedly burnt a water company's truck.

sources: Nicaraguan National Union of Students; *El Nuevo Diario*, *La Nacion*, and Reuters via Nicaragua Solidarity Network of Greater New York. source: <http://home.earthlink.net/dbwilson/wnuhome.html>

## Argentinian Teachers Strike For Wages, Funding

Over 90% of the teachers in Argentina struck on April 9. The 500,000 person strike demanded higher pay and state implementation of a law to tax cars to fund education.

source: *Hoy* and Associated Press via Weekly News Update <http://home.earthlink.net/dbwilson/wnuhome.html>





# ACTIVISM ROUNDUP

## Activists Pie Geneticist

On April 8, "Agent Carob" of the Central Iowa Anarchist (CIA) cell of the Biotic Baking Brigade pied an "advocate of market biotechnology" as he delivered a keynote speech at the Hudson Institute. On March 11, three "agents" of the Biotic Baking Brigade Nor'eastah Irregulars "smooshed" a lecturing geneticist with a pie at the University of New Hampshire. David "Creamy Genes" Pike was arrested five days later and now faces up to seven years in prison if convicted of felony conspiracy.

Genetic research is currently used to register lifeforms as private property. The World Trade Organization plans to create laws to protect corporate ownership of lifeforms, which would criminalize non-profit use of any organism registered as property.

Pike said, "I see the geneticists of today as parallel with the Nazi doctors of the Third Reich. To them, the human race is the master race and the rest of life is disposable. Plants may be mutated and animals mutilated for any whim of human 'need' or greed."

Send letters of support and donations to: David Pike, New Hampshire Earth First! P.O. Box 4101, Portsmouth, NH 03802.

*sources: Biotic Baking Brigade-Nor'eastah Irregulars via newsgroup misc.activism.progressive, agitation-propaganda agit-prop@energy-net.org via Direct Action Media Network damn@tao.ca, and Craig Benjamin at <http://nativeamericas.aip.cornell.edu>*

## Guatemalan Indians Win Freedom From School Uniforms

On April 8 Guatemala's minister of education ruled that schools must allow students to wear traditional indigenous clothes.

The 1996 peace accord affirmed Indigenous peoples' rights to respect for their cultures, but at least one school tried to suspend students wearing Indigenous clothing.

*source: La Nacion and Associated Press via Weekly News Update <http://home.earthlink.net/dbwilson/wnuhome.html>*

## Workers And Students Demonstrate Against Cutbacks In Jamaica

On April 16, protests across Jamaica began against tax increases and a 30% rise in gas prices. They closed most schools and businesses in Kingston.

On April 20, a private security guard killed one protester and police wounded six others in Kingston. Police arrested 140 people. Shortly afterwards, the president of Jamaica indicated he would revoke the increase in gas prices.

*source: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*

## Riots and Repression in Malaysia

Former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was convicted on charges of corruption and sentenced to six years imprisonment on April 14th. Many international observers have protested the trial and conviction. The trial was rife with inconsistencies. The judge was biased: he disallowed defense witnesses, imprisoned and fined defense lawyers on contempt charges, and refused to allow the defense to argue their case based upon a political conspiracy theory. Anwar states that he was fired, and later charged, because he disagreed with Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad on the issue of how to revitalise the Malaysian economy. Anwar was beaten by the chief of police immediately after his arrest.

Riots erupted in the capital city Kuala Lumpur after Anwar's conviction, continuing for over three days. Police have cracked down on the rioters, using tear gas, batons, water cannons, and dye (which is used to mark rioters for later arrest) to break up the riots. The opposition party coalition has called for calm and an end to the rioting. Unconfirmed reports state that plain-clothes policemen instigated the riots to lure out dissidents to arrest, and thus discredit the Reformation Party which is headed by Anwar's wife Azizah Ismail, before next year's general election.

*source: CNN.*





# TOWARDS A NEW WSA

## ACTIVIST SLATE VOWS TO GALVANIZE STUDENT REPRESENTATION AT WESLEYAN

*This year, a group of active students has come together with a vision to rejuvenate the WSA. Our commitment to change is supported by principled concerns for the vision and values of the university and its student body. We support action on issues of student group relations, Middletown relations, administrative accountability and WSA focus. The WSA requires a structured vision in order to advance as an organization and serve as a resource for the community. While WSA boasts a balanced budget, significant efforts on the part of Educational Policy and Faculty/Student Affairs Committee and a number of committed representatives, the organization is largely stagnant and unresponsive. This can and will change provided that representatives commit to some long-range goals and seek to connect with the community-at-large. The WSA needs to be a strong advocate of student concerns on campus. Accountability from our administration, particularly in returning students to committees which decide policies affecting students, strengthening student groups and helping them work together, supporting the campaigns of student groups that deal with socially responsible university and investment, bringing Wesleyan into the Middletown community, and reopening discussion on the much-hated meal plan must be the focus of the WSA, if it is to serve as a voice and vision for the college body.*

*President – Andrew Calica '01*

*Vice-President- David Perlman '01*

*Junior Class representatives: Billy Clareman, Roger Smith*

*Sophomore class representatives: Sandy Aylesworth, Adam Hurter, Cara Smith*

### The Problem Now

The problem of collective action in student government is turnover and the lack of internal unity. Unlike a typical student group, the entirety of WSA is an elected body brought together with separate constituencies, loyalties and agendas. The committee system distributes power under the notion that if one group is ineffective the others can still be productive. The common interest is often difficult to iden-

tify and the committees operate on an independent basis and are neither accountable to one another nor necessarily working towards the same goals. As a result, it is difficult for the WSA to move as a whole and it operates as a reactive institution. Perhaps the most debilitating problem is that the WSA operates under a strange blend of what Weber describes as government by bureaucracy and government of charisma. While the

President's duties are largely undefined, it is clearly up to him/her to guide the organization with vision and direction. The President must serve as a conduit between WSA and student groups, administration and Trustees and encourage a unified vision for the individual committees. Charisma and bureaucracy must be blended such that once a long-term plan is implemented the organization can move as a whole over time but that in a given year the President need not be an outstanding leader.

ANDREW J CALICA, WSA COORDINATOR

### What do Student Groups Need?

Student leaders freely admit that many student groups at Wesleyan are plagued by apathy, lack of commitment, an indifferent or even hostile administration, lack of continuity from year to year, early burnout for group leaders, lack of support from faculty, and poor communication with other groups on campus.

The WSA must encourage communication and alliances among groups, and must simplify basic processes like booking rooms, renting equipment, and obtaining



HERMES



funds. Something which would help greatly is allotting space for a student union. Unlike the current cramped WSA building, it will be a permanent space for all student groups to have meetings, do work, and most importantly, become part of a community of concerned students. In the past, if the WSA had felt a need for this center, it would have tried to create it alone, without the support of the students on whose behalf it was to be created, and without cooperating with others working on the same issue — in this case the Community Learning Network, WESUNITY, numerous student groups, and Student Services. As the group leaders who encouraged us to run for office can attest to, those days are over.

ROGER SMITH, ADAM HURTER,  
CARA SMITH, SANDY AYLESWORTH,  
BILLY CLAREMAN

### How Can We Improve Relations With Middletown?

The university does little to foster a positive relationship with Middletown and several university policies inhibit the student body from investing in and interacting with the city in a meaningful way. Student life at Wesleyan cannot be improved without improving relations with Middletown. Students complain that there is nothing to do in the town, that there is no where to go, and that they have no reason to leave campus. After we investigated the situation and talked with numerous Middletown residents and business owners, it became clear that today's situation is the result of failed policies. Middletown used to have a thriving movie theater. The heavily subsidized film series, and an economic downturn forced the closure of two first-run movie theaters. We need to take care to keep this from happening a third time.

The current meal plan policy also needs to be reevaluated. Students are not happy with eating at Mocon and Itza, and buying from the unreasonably priced Weshop for a full four years. In his office hours, President Bennet expressed a willingness to reduce the buy-in for upperclassman if it is shown to be economically feasible. We need to remove the financial disincentives from eating at Middletown's restaurants and from interacting with the town. Every year, we spend approximately \$6 million dollars on campus dining,

money that could be going to local businesses and that would make Wesleyan part of the Middletown community. Furthermore, within the last few years, we've had an ATM installed on campus, and turned WESHOP into a video store, as if in an attempt to eliminate any need to leave campus. If we want Middletown to be a student-friendly town we have an obligation to help our community.

BILLY CLAREMAN AND ROGER SMITH

### University Finances

In order for such long term goals as the construction of a student union, and becoming a part of the Middletown community to be realized, the WSA finance committee, FiFac, must assert its accordance with our vision for the Wesleyan Community. With regard to redefining our relationship with Middletown, it may be necessary for the University to extend itself monetarily (i.e. providing tuition benefits for food service workers here on campus, or subsidizing losses from the meal plan until a new campus center can be built). Finally, it is imperative that the University preserve its practice of need blind admission and continue create policies that reflect the importance of economic diversity.

SANDY AYLESWORTH

### Conclusion

The WSA needs a directional revolution. The structure and procedures are satisfactory; the WSA needs a vision to serve as the catalyst for change. The WSA needs a President and a group of representatives committed to change and action. This group must work in-tandem

with the other representatives to address "micro-goals". These include: making WSA user friendly through an accessible Web Page and On-Line voting; working with existing resources such as CLN, WESUNITY, and WesLead to bring student groups together and facilitate scheduling, collective action, and consciousness-raising; and making real connections between WSA and groups through COCO liaisons and directly with the President, who should meet with as many student groups as possible and should regularly hold discussions with other leaders. These micro-goals are necessary to facilitate the realization of "macro-goals" including: the development of a long range plan that stakes out a position for WSA in the larger community and creates a relationship between student groups that is lasting and mutually beneficial. The WSA should reflect on the direction of the University under the Strategy for Wesleyan and determine where student interests need to be advocated for and how best to go about attaining them. The long-range plan should be the product of discussion amongst appropriate communities and interests and then recorded in written form. The WSA must do a better job of responding to its constituency by developing relationships with athletes, international students, students of color, the Argus, fraternities and other active, organized groups in order to further common goals. The WSA should change its image by doing something concrete, not merely correcting superficial problems. The only way to make WSA effective is to outline a direction and then move decisively toward it.

ANDREW CALICA



HERMES



# WORDS OF A WOMANIST

## ON LIVING IN A FEMINIST-INFESTED DEN OF MILITANT LESBIANS

By Karen Gross

"Aren't you tired of having all of those women on top of you?" asked one of my female relatives when I returned home for winter break.

"You'd better be watching out for the lesbians!" warned another.

Such comments have been hurled at me ever since I opted to live in Womanist House. Stereotypes and suspicion still seem to accompany being associated with the "women's movement," not to mention residing in an all-female, potentially political living space. As recently as April 19, 1999, columnist John Leo in *U.S. News and World Report*, scorned the "male-bashing feminists" that populated the universities he was touring with his daughter. The relative who made the second comment (and who automatically assumed that I am straight) is, of all things, a social worker in San Francisco. I have realized that both men and women, liberal and conservative, often equate being openly and actively pro-woman with being a militant, man-hating, sexually-predatory lesbian.

Why do the Womanists live without men? In my opinion, just as men gain strength from being with a group of men so are women empowered by uniting with a group of women. I think Womanist House is a declaration of independence from patriarchal expectations; an opportunity where women can choose how we would like to live, what we would like to talk about, and what kinds of activities we would like to organize. I do not think most Womanists get their kicks by male bashing, but rather by questioning society.

Here's a question: why is it normal and appropriate for men to live and mobilize together but threatening and/or "political" for women to do the same? Okay, two more: Has anyone noticed that there are no sorority houses on this campus, while

there are four large, centrally located fraternities? If there is a Connecticut anti-brothel law behind this, as I have heard, why wasn't it eliminated years ago?

I feel that women share an ongoing struggle against degradation and oppression. Aren't we still objectified in beer commercials, to name one example? Don't we still face catcalls, stares, and sexual violence? Aren't we still starving our bodies to look "beautiful?" Aren't we still fighting for our health plans to pay for contraception, while they are more likely to pay for Viagra?

Of course, I think women have more in common than societal injustices. When I

not believe that all women can or should get along just because they are women. I prefer to judge people on an individual basis.

Also, I hesitate to generalize that I can relate to the experiences of all women, or that many women can relate to my experience. We are not just "women," we are Black women, Latina women, Asian women, Jewish women, Christian women, Lesbian women, Straight Women.... The women's movement itself has at times been insensitive to the many experiences of women, and the name "Feminist House" was replaced by "Womanist House" because of feminism's

history of either ignoring or marginalizing the perspective of non-white and non-wealthy women.

"Womanism," a concept described in the writings of Alice Walker and Audre Lorde, would ideally serve as a term that embraces and celebrates the experiences of all women. However, Womanist House grapples with the problematic nature of "woman" as a concept. "Woman" has often implied "white women" and has been exclusive of those who face racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination and/or

homophobia. This year Womanist House is composed predominantly of white women, as are (by no coincidence) the weekly gatherings we have held for "all Wesleyan women." The term "women of color," as well as the Women of Color House at Wesleyan, seems to have come about to accommodate a broader range of experiences.

Though I think it is important that women unite along the lines of race, ethnicity and sexual orientation, I worry that we are forgetting what we have in common as a gender. I have found that it is rare for a diverse group of women to mobilize politically around our shared issues, or simply to hang out. One exception that comes to my mind is



listen to women's words, poetry, and song I often think, "Yes, I know how you feel." Without making nature or nurture arguments, I sense that there is something women just "get" about each other. Frankly, I often forget that I'm living in a house with just women. I think this comfort level is itself political. If a woman feels comfortable, supported, and safe in her home, whether it's an all-female or coed space, I feel that she will have more strength and confidence in her day-to-day dealings.

I will not attest that living with women is a constant bonding session or political power trip, that we always see eye-to-eye, or that living in a single-sex residence is the right choice for every woman. I do



Bridging the Gap, an interactive workshop spurred by the Women of Color Collective, which was intended to address the divisions in the Wesleyan women's community. The event was significant because it marked the unified support of many women's groups around a common event.

Last year, the format of the all-female workshop involved placing a "group" of women (varying from race to sexual orientation to religion to ethnicity) in the center of a larger circle. Everyone closed her eyes, and then the women in the outside circle called out the images and stereo-

types that they felt were linked with the group in the center. The un-politically correct candidness of the evening made women face the perceptions we have of each other. A second Bridging the Gap was held this year on April 22 but consisted primarily of discussion-oriented activities.

Certainly this event was a good way to begin, but it will take more than an evening of frank conversation to break down the barriers between Wesleyan women. As Womanist House manager next year, I hope to continue the sentiment I have drawn from the Bridging the

Gap workshops—that is, that women simply want to be treated as individuals before being treated as some kind of individual with some kind of background, lifestyle, and history. Though we are proud of our cultures and lifestyles, we do not want to be stereotyped or to have assumptions made about us. We want to feel comfortable and be treated with respect, both by other women and by men. We do not want to unite only out of shared struggle but also in friendship, celebration, and love. Hey, we might even want to live with just women. ☺

# SENIOR SLUMP

by Kate Holbein

## THE LIFE-CYCLE OF A STUDENT ACTIVIST

*Is this the life-cycle of a student activist? Does it sound familiar?*

*Frosh Year: Go to the activities fair and sign up for a dozen organizations. Attend a multitude of protests, vigils and rallies (Free Mumia!, Save Financial Aid!, Take Back the Night!, End Police Brutality!, Save Special Interest Housing!). Attend the meetings of half a dozen campus groups then commit to one or two. Continue to receive voice-mail messages from groups you forgot you had signed up for. Bring tremendous wide-eyed enthusiasm and energy to all of your activities. Try to reinvent the wheel.*

*Sophomore Year: Commit seriously to one issue. Become the coordinator of one of these groups. Be a leader, a motivator, a delegator. Recruit frosh. Try to restructure the organization so that meetings run more smoothly and effectively. Work your ass off.*

*Junior Year: Continued participation in the organization of choice until you leave for a semester abroad in Australia, Tanzania or Chile.*

*Senior Year: Involvement in campus activism dwindles. Guiltily avoid the long, often frustrating weekly meetings of student organizations. Devote time to "the fun stuff" like dance, music, or intramural soccer. Go to the Career Resource Center and look for a job in the non-profit sector that will allow you to help change the world after graduation.*

I've become what I always promised myself I would never turn into: an uninvolved senior. As a frosh and sophomore, I was frustrated that only a hand full of seniors participated in E3, the organization that I co-coordinated. The students who ran E3 the year before now showed up to meetings only sporadically, if at all. I thought to myself, "seniors are the ones with experience, they know what has happened in the last few years, it's selfish and wrong to become apathetic during senior year...." Now, as a senior, I find myself avoiding student organizations and choosing more self-indulgent extracurriculars. I still attend "Take Back the Night," vigils for Matthew Shepard, lectures about the conflict in Kosovo, and protests against

sanctions on Iraq. Yet my involvement in student activist organizations is practically non-existent. Is this typical?

I know other students have followed a very different path; some seniors are more involved in student groups this year than ever before. One senior I spoke to, Steffie Kinglake, said that she thinks many seniors are still very active, but concentrate on fewer issues, narrowing the scope of their involvement. Kinglake said, "I think that over the years at Wesleyan you become more aware of the importance of not spreading yourself too thin, and you realize that your activism is much more productive and influential if you can really put quality time into it." Although some student groups are successful at retaining

upperclassmen as members, I do notice a trend that many groups are largely made up of frosh, sophomores, and some juniors. Why can't certain student activist groups retain seniors as members? Why do many seniors lose interest in student organizations by the time they reach their fourth year at Wesleyan?

Perhaps seniors come to believe that trying to create change from our little campus in Middletown, CT is ineffective. When we protest on the steps of Olin, who hears us? I am unwilling to accept this explanation, however. I think most of us realize that student activism has played a crucial role in some of the most effective social movements, both in the United States and around the world.

Perhaps seniors are simply turning their eyes to the future. We think to ourselves that we have the rest of our lives to work for social change, and we should spend our last year at Wesleyan enjoying resources that we won't have access to elsewhere. Maybe we're just burnt-out. Whatever the explanation, our decrease in involvement is unfortunate because we do have experience and perspective that underclassmen don't have. It is difficult enough to have continuity in activist organizations when the student body constantly changes. However, I know that I shouldn't talk. If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem, right? ☺



# "CLUB 'EM LIKE BABY SEALS"

NOTES ON A WEEKEND OF ACTIVISM-TYPE ACTIVITY

by Laura Clawson

Title: Club 'Em Like Baby Seals  
Subtitle/TOC: Notes on a weekend of activism-related activity

Drawing well over 500 participants last weekend's Scholars, Artists, and Writers for Social Justice (SAWSJ) "Challenging Corporate Control" teach-in was remarkably successful.

The conference opened Friday evening with remarks by journalists Barbara Ehrenreich and Katha Pollitt; John Wilhelm, president of HERE (who had spoken very briefly at the preceding rally); Maria Elena Durazo, president of Los Angeles HERE Local 11; and Linda Chavez-Thompson of the AFL-CIO. They spoke on a panel about the right to organize. Faithful readers of *Hermes* will know that, though workers in the US are supposed to have the legal right to organize, employers break the law left and right and seldom get punished for it.

Barbara Ehrenreich spoke first; she described an experiment in which she moved into a cheap apartment for a month and got jobs through the want ads without relying on her education and elite work experience. She worked as a hotel housekeeper and waitress; she even

worked both jobs for several days. The only things she spent money on were rent, gas, and food. And she couldn't make enough to support herself.

The right to organize, she went on to say, is not the only right American workers are denied. Some American workers can't even take bathroom breaks. As Supervisors increasingly see bathroom breaks as a privilege, the rate of kidney problems in workers has risen. Some American workers have no freedom of speech or assembly; at many workplaces they are not allowed to speak to each other about anything that is not directly work-related (i.e. "pass the mop"). Ehrenreich ironically contrasted this reality with the conservative claim that sexual harassment laws limit workplace speech.

American workers also have no right to privacy: their pockets and purses can be searched at any time, and mandatory drug testing is on the rise. Why, Ehrenreich asked, do people need to be clean and sober to stack Cheerios in a supermarket? She argued that bread-and-butter issues like pay and benefits can't be separated from issues of rights and dignity. The fight for workers' rights, she said, should be a new civil rights movement. People

talk and talk about welfare damaging recipients' self-esteem, but how is work supposed provide dignity when your boss doesn't value you enough to pay a living wage?

Following Ehrenreich, Maria Elena Durazo argued that using current laws to defend the right to organize doesn't work and that lobbying won't change them; instead, we have to win change in the streets by building our power and making demands rather than timid requests.

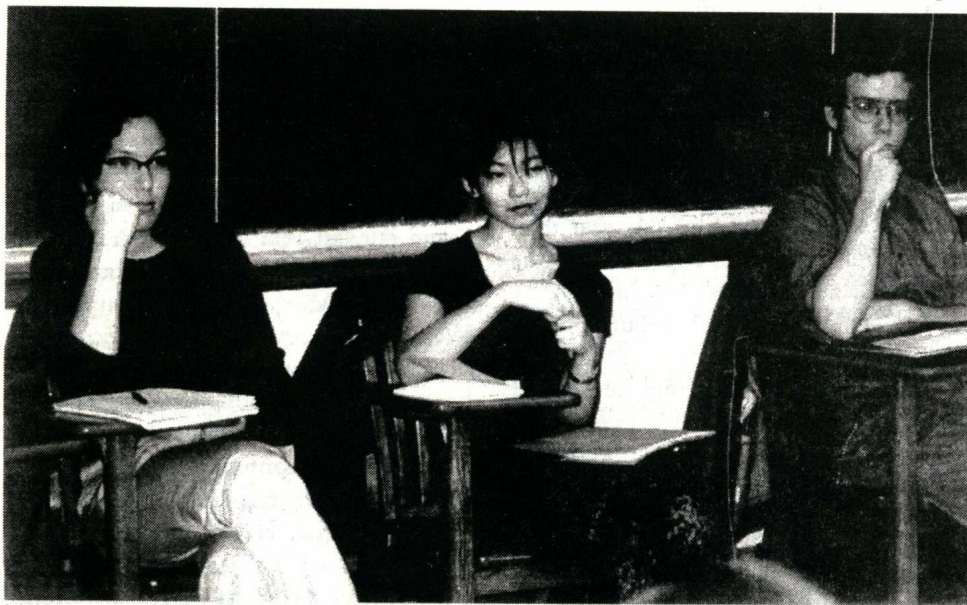
Then Katha Pollitt argued that unions must always have the greater social good in mind. For instance, they should not push for more prisons even if prisons mean some union jobs. With that in mind, she said unions should go beyond just organizing workers there's too many who don't work; and many who do work are also tenants and students and consumers and so forth.

Saturday was divided into three time slots, with eight to 10 panels during each one. A few highlights:

Bruce Raynor, secretary-treasurer of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE), spoke on organizing the Southwidely considered to be the area of the country most hostile to unions. Raynor is one of today's most successful southern organizers; UNITE has organized 20,000 southern workers in the past decade.

Raynor spoke of the need for persistence in organizing. In one campaign UNITE lost four elections between 1979 and 1990. After the 1990 loss, he and the other organizers had to leave through a gauntlet of jeering, spitting, anti-union workers. UNITE stuck at it, and in 1994 the plant's workers voted to unionize by a two-to-one margin.

Raynor and UNITE have been successful for reasons other than their persistence, though. Their originality pushed through a number of campaigns. After a K-Mart distribution center in



Nina Haiman, USLAC Organizer, spoke on an international panel on Student Labor Activism



Greensboro, North Carolina, voted to unionize, the management refused to negotiate an acceptable contract. When they found out K-mart was sponsoring a nationally-televised golf tournament in the near future, they seized the opportunity to force the company's hand. They declared that they would disrupt play if K-Mart did not make contract concessions by the day of the tournament.

Twenty-four hours before the tournament, the organizers faced something of a dilemma. K-mart had made no concessions, and the workers had made their threat on the assumption that it would have some effect—they had no plan for actually disrupting the tournament. So they planned fast.

The day of the Greater Greensboro Open, police surrounded the union hall as if filled with workers, but tournament security didn't notice the 100 or so workers and organizers who entered course as audience members. When the lead golfer approached the 10th hole, 100 workers filed out and sat down on the green. With people in the audience shouting "club 'em like baby seals," they disrupted play for over an hour as police carried them away one by one. K-Mart still refused to negotiate.

Finally, UNITE gained the support of some black ministers, who attended a rally in the parking lot of a local K-Mart store. The police came and, true to form, shoved around and arrested the rally participants. They didn't bother to distinguish between workers and ministers. While the workers were used to this treatment, the ministers became somewhat incensed. The workers got their contract after the following Sunday, when the ministers held services in the same parking lot.

Andy Stern, president of the SEIU, participated on a panel about the health-care industry during the same time block. The panel chair observed that just as the auto industry had been the prototypical American industry of the 1930s, health-care is the prototypical American industry of the 1990s. Stern concurred, pointing out that when 70,000 California home healthcare workers voted to unionize, it was the second-largest union vote in US history. The largest was a mid-1930s vote of 90,000 auto workers who labored under

the same roof the health-care workers in the California were working under 70,000 different roofs. Journalist Suzanne Gordon argued that unionizing health-care workers is particularly important, as the quality of patient care is very much dependent on workers feeling able to speak out on behalf of their patients.

That excellent presentations were given by relatively little-known people like Maria Elena Durazo, Suzanne

Gordon, and countless others demonstrates a point that Wesleyan would do well to remember. Big-name speakers are seldom better speakers. It may be more exciting to be able to tell your friends that you heard someone really famous speak, but when you hear them speak, they're in the middle of lecture tours giving stale speeches they've delivered a dozen times before. There are tons of smart, exciting people who are cheaper and better than brand-name speakers. ●

## How (NOT) To Have a SPEAK-OUT

by Laura Clawson

There's an art to organizing and speaking at rallies. It's a difficult one to master, and its importance is often underestimated. Last week I had the misfortune of learning first-hand that even the experienced organizers of Yale's Graduate Employee Student Organization (GESO) have problems running rallies. I want to use that occasion to discuss some common pitfalls in this endeavor.

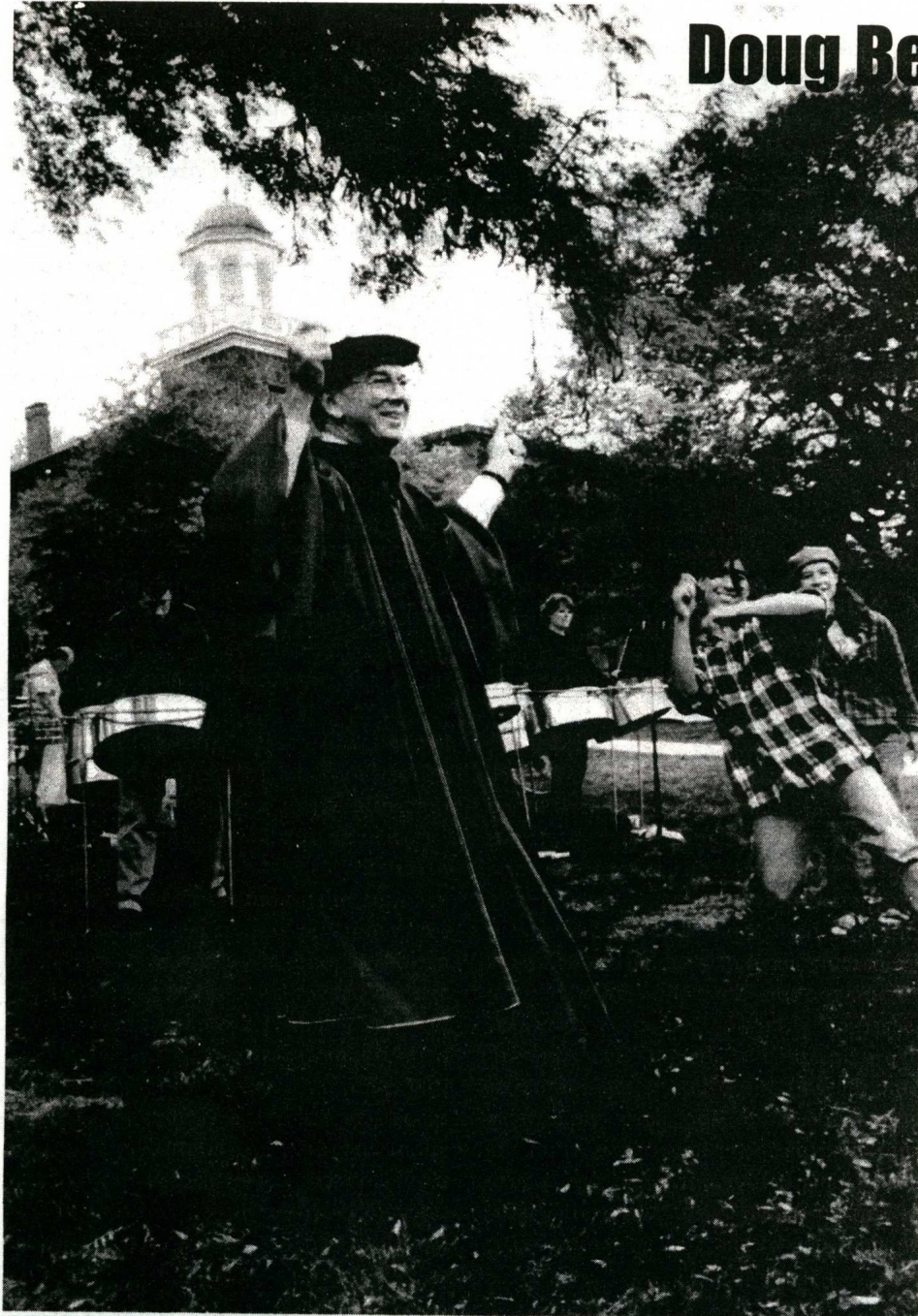
The rally was supposed to last for an hour and be followed by a break for dinner before the beginning of the Scholars, Artists, and Writers for Social Justice (SAWSJ) teach-in. Seven people were scheduled to speak: a Yale undergraduate; Laura Smith, president of the Yale clerical and technical workers union (HERE 34); a Yale graduate student; a New Haven minister; John Wilhelm, president of the hotel and restaurant employees union (HERE); Andy Stern, president of the Services Employees International Union; and Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice-president of the AFL-CIO. This lineup could have been trimmed by one person, but it's entirely possible to have seven people speak in an hour-long rally. They just have to hold their egos in check and keep their remarks to five or six minutes.

It is understandable that an undergraduate might not realize the importance of brevity at these events—concision is something you only understand on a theoretical level until you've stood through several unbearable rallies dragged out by interminable speeches. So about the undergraduate who spoke at this rally, I will say only that while she should have known, she also should have been reminded and then cut off at eight minutes.

Laura Smith of HERE 34 is a veteran of far too many labor struggles at Yale—she knew to be brief and inspirational rather than long and informational. The graduate student who spoke was another story entirely. Before she began, they announced that the rally would be move indoors when she finished because of the rain. Some people might take the cue and keep their remarks brief. Not her. She spoke for something like 20 minutes. At one point, she asked rhetorically "What do we want?" She didn't even take the hint when several Teamsters replied "To march." Rather, she said "no, wait," and continued reading. She was the third speaker of seven, and when she finished we were 40 minutes into a rally scheduled for an hour.

We did get our dinner break, though it was half as long as scheduled. How? The four remaining speakers, including the heads of two international unions and the highest-ranking woman in the labor movement, took up the same amount of time combined as either of the Yale students who preceded them. Experienced speakers know that rallies are not the forum for communicating substantial information; you educate people about the issues should before and after, the rally itself should be a show of strength, a time to build community and excitement. Experienced speakers often begin and end with chants, in order to involve the crowd. The best speakers keep themselves to one or two substantive points, delivered concisely. This is a point on which the labor movement has traditionally been stronger than, say, anti-war movements or any identity politics I can think of. ●





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